



THE SEMINOLE GREENTHUMB

Residential Horticulture
Seminole County Extension
407-665-5550



JANUARY – FEBRUARY – MARCH

LAWNS:

- **Mowing:** Standard grasses, mow when the turf reaches 4 to 4 1/2 inches high. Dwarf varieties, mow when the turf reaches 3 1/2 inches. Do not remove more than 1/3 of the height of the leaf blade with any mowing. Return clippings on the lawn unless excessive.
- **Irrigation:** Apply 3/4 inches of water at each irrigation period. During the winter, grasses only need to be watered once every 10-14 days. During warmer periods, water twice a week. Over watering encourages nutrient leaching, shallow rooting and disease problems.
- **Weed Control:** Apply pre-emergent herbicide such as atrazine in St. Augustine grass around or before February 15. Do not apply herbicides if the turf is under moisture stress or if air temperatures exceed 85 degrees F.
- **Fertilization:** Apply a complete fertilizer, 8-2-12 at the rate of 0.5 pound nitrogen per 1000 square feet (e.g., 6.25 pounds/1000 sq. feet) during March or two weeks following spring's new growth. At this rate you can make 4 applications of fertilizer/year.

CITRUS

- **Fertilization:** Apply a citrus special fertilizer in March at the rate determined by the trunk circumference measured in inches at the base. Total inches will equal total pounds of fertilizer per year. If measurement is 12 inches, apply 3 pounds of fertilizer at each of the 4 recommended applications per year in March, May, August, and October. Spread the fertilizer uniformly over the area from about 1 ft. away from the trunk to 3 feet past the "drip line" of the tree.

WINTER 2012

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Seminole County Extension
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November 6, 2011 — March 11, 2012

Seminole County water Conservation Ordinance #2009-24 states residential homeowners may only irrigate

one day per week

- If your house is odd # only on Saturday
- If your house is even# only on Sunday
- Commercial irrigation only on Tuesday
- **No watering** between 10:00am-4:00pm
- Limited to no more than 3/4in. per zone
- Limited to one hour per zone

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IFAS ~ EXTENSION

<http://solutionsforyourlife.com>

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>

<http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu>

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences is an Equal Employment Opportunity - Affirmative Action Employer authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap or national origin. COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE, HOME ECONOMICS, STATE OF FLORIDA, IFAS, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND BOARDS OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COOPERATING.



(Continued from pg 1)

- **Irrigation:** Water once weekly or when trees show any wilting to avoid stressing the plants, especially when expecting low temperatures.
- **Weed control:** Citrus should be kept free of weeds and never mulched. Keep the weeds away from young trees 3 ft. around the trunk; for older trees, keep weeds out of the area under the canopy of the tree. Use only herbicides with no soil activity.
- **Pruning:** Prune only to remove diseased or cold damaged branches, during the months of March through June. Dooryard citrus usually do not need any pruning.

PALMS

- **Fertilization:** Palms should be fertilized three times per year and in deep sandy soils up to six times per year. Use a special slow release palm fertilizer such as 8-2-12- 4Mg. Use 12 pounds of fertilizer per 1000 square feet 3 times a year. If nutritional deficiencies of a particular nutrient are visible, additional applications of that nutrient may be necessary to correct the problem.
- **Irrigation:** Most palms will benefit from a supplemental watering once per week. Palms from arid regions such as Date palms should not be irrigated once established.
- **Pruning:** Old dead leaves should be removed by cutting them from the underside to avoid tearing the fibers of the palm's stem. Do not remove green or slightly spotted leaves, palms need all the available green photosynthetic area to produce food.

*** **Note:** *When palms are close to other landscape plants and lawn, use a palm fertilizer to fertilize all plants within 50 feet of the palms. Fertilizers with high nitrogen to potassium ratio will result in a severe to lethal potassium and magnesium*

Winter Vegetables & Herbs

VEGETABLES – Beets, Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Collards, Horseradish, Lettuce, Mustard, Onions, Peas, Radishes, Spinach, Swiss chard and Turnips.

HERBS - Anise, Basil, Bay, Chives, Cilantro, Coriander, Dill, Fennel, Lavender, Mint, Oregano, Parsley, Rosemary, Sage, Sweet marjoram, Thyme and Watercress.

FLOWERS – Alyssum, Baby's breath, Begonia, Bush daisy, Calendula, Candytuft, Carnation, Chrysanthemums, Delphinium, Dianthus, Dusty miller, Foxglove, Geranium, Hollyhock, Iceland poppy, Lobelia, Ornamental cabbage & kale, Pansy, Petunia, Salvia, Snapdragon, Sweet pea, Verbena and Viola.



FLORIDA YARDS & NEIGHBORHOODS PROGRAM

www.seminolecountyfl.gov/fyn

1. Right Plant, Right Place
2. **Water Efficiently**
3. Fertilize Appropriately
4. Mulch
5. Attract Wildlife
6. Manage Yard Pests Responsibly
7. Recycle
8. Reduce Stormwater Runoff
9. Protect the Waterfront

As winter begins in central Florida most yards will start to look brown and go dormant like the yards up north. It may be confusing coming from the north to central Florida believe that plants and grasses go dormant in the seemingly mild winters. We live in climate zone 9B, which means that plants are acclimatized to withstand temperatures between 30- 25 with little or no damage or death. But, plants in your yard that are from zone 10 or above will not handle temperatures below 30. As you prepare for those cold nights in December, January, and even February that fall below freezing for extended periods of time you will notice damage to many of your plants. Your grass will typically go into a dormant state when evening temperature drop below the mid 50's.

There are two types of freezes that have different impacts on your yard. They are:

Radiational Freezes/Frosts- occur on calm, clear nights when heat radiates from the surfaces of objects into the environment. The damage from this type of cold snap can be minimized by reducing radial heat loss from plants and soil surface. Proper mulching to protect the plant roots and soils from freezing can help. Covering plants protects them more from frost than extreme cold.

Advection Freezes- occur when cold air masses move from northern regions causing a sudden drop in temperature. Plant protection during this type of freeze is more difficult. The root systems are damaged when the warmth of the soils are quickly dissipated by the sudden drop in temperature. be sure when covering plants before this type of cold that the covers extend all the way to the ground and the covers do not make contact with the plant foliage. The foliage in contact with the cover is often injured because of heat transfer from foliage to the colder cover.

Both types of freezes have different impacts on different areas of your yard as well. The ability of plants to acclimate or withstand freezing temperatures is affected by temperature fluctuations and day lengths prior to a freeze. A gradual decrease in temperature over a period of time increases the ability of plants to withstand cold temperatures. A sudden decrease in temperature in late fall or early winter usually results in more damage than the same low temperatures in January or February. Short durations of warmer temperatures in midwinter can de-acclimate some plants and trigger them to spring bloom early and allow for the new blooms to be damaged by typical cold weather later in the season.

So, what can you do in your yard to protect your plants? If you have plants from zone 10 or higher you may just have to replace them in the spring with colder hardy plants from zone 9b. Many people construct covered boxes or place blankets over their plants. This is a good way to protect smaller specimens but may not work for others. Many people have good intentions for covering their plants and forget to remove the covers during the daylight and leave the covers for too long and the cover does the damage or kills the plant, especially if you use black or clear plastic.

Watering landscape plants early in the day before a freeze can help protect the plants. Well saturated soil will absorb more solar radiation than dry soil and will reradiate heat during the night. Too much water however can damage the root systems of plants even more than the cold. Plants growth slows during the winter and over watering will cause damage. Remember water if needed only one day a week normally.

After a freeze you may apply water to the soil to provide water to the plants. Pruning should be delayed until new growth appears to ensure not too much of the plant is removed. Leaf material that is damaged and turns brown can be removed if a high level of maintenance is required. Happy Gardening!!

To schedule a FYN program for your Homeowner Association or organization, or learn more contact Gabrielle Milch, FYN Coordinator, at 407 665-5575 or fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov. Check out the websites www.seminolecountyfl.gov/fyn and www.FloridaYards.org

“Ask A Master Gardener”

407-665-5550

This final issue on the topic of self watering planters describes how to plant and care for vegetables in your planter. Locate the planter in a spot appropriate for the plant you intend to grow. For fruiting or pod vegetables, choose a spot that receives at least 6 hours of direct sunlight daily for best results. Leafy vegetables may benefit from partial shade during the hot summer days.

PLANTS TO GROW: Most plants will grow in the container using these instructions. Experiment with different vegetables, herbs and flowers. Tomatoes are possibly the most popular plant grown in these types of containers, but many other vegetables and plant varieties are also grown by gardeners.

GROWING MEDIUM: Use only POTTING MIX in the planter; not soil from the earth. Nearly any brand of potting mix for containers or hanging plants will work. The amount of potting mix required to fill the planter will depend on which recycled container size was used to construct the planter. Between one and two cubic feet will be required for most sizes constructed from buckets. A big bag is frequently 2 cubic feet (about 60 quarts). This size bag should fill about 2 planters, again depending on the size of the recycled container. The potting mix should last several seasons before needing to be replaced.

FERTILIZER: Do not use fertilizers designed to be mixed with water. Use only a dry granular fertilizer or plant food for vegetables with all 3 numbers on the label between 5 and 10. Almost any brand of granular fertilizer will work. The lower numbers pose less risk of burning tender roots of young plants, but most plants will thrive using a fertilizer product in the stated range. For a 4 to 5 gallon bucket size planter, apply one cup of fertilizer for each planting (crop). If organic fertilizers are used, apply 1.5 cups of organic fertilizer instead of the 1 cup of chemical fertilizer. No additional fertilizer is needed during the growing season. The fertilizer should be applied on top of the potting mix in a continuous band in a pattern that insures a minimum distance of 3” from the band to the center of any plant in the planter.

PLANTING: One important consideration is choosing a planting pattern that will allow adequate spacing between the fertilizer band and the roots. This is one factor that will determine the number of plants that will fit in the container. The other factor is the expected mature size of the variety planted. For tomatoes, only one plant per planter is suggested, particularly the large indeterminate varieties. For other plants and vegetables, use the canopy size of the mature plant, along with the minimum distance from the fertilizer band to determine how many plants will reasonably fit into the planter. Avoid overcrowding the planter. The plants should always be planted through the plastic cover into the potting mix. Always leave the plastic cover on. Gently loosen the plant’s root ball and set your plants into the soil as far away from the fertilizer strip as possible (maintaining a minimum distance of 3”).

WATERING: Never add water directly to the potting mix. Always use the fill tube to keep the water reservoir filled. The reservoir is full when water flows from the overflow hole. Add water every few days when the plants are young, and about every day when plants are mature. Over watering will not occur using this technique. Avoid allowing the reservoir to go dry, as this will disrupt the wicking process.

SUPPORT: Tall plants will need support. Many methods of support are available including stakes in the ground beside the planter, locating the planter near an existing fence, etc. The planter may blow over in gusty winds with tall plants such as large tomatoes. Smaller plants may not require any staking.

FOR TOMATOES AND VEGETABLES: Most vegetables require a higher pH level than some potting mixes provide, and tomatoes benefit from Calcium. To minimize blossom end rot in tomatoes, add 1 cup of dolomite to the potting mix before each planting.



The Teaching Gardens Of Seminole County

To educate and to encourage the practice of urban horticulture



Extension Office Garden • 250 W County Home Rd, Sanford, 32773

The Extension Office teaching gardens are hunkering down for winter. The Vegetable plots in the front and back of the office are thriving with a mixture of a late fall harvest of tomatoes, peppers, okra and new winter crops including cabbage, lettuce and strawberries. The Sun, Partial Sun, Shade and Water-Wise Florida-Friendly gardens continue to show off great planting ideas for your landscape gardens. Come out to the Office and take a look! Stop by the Master Gardener desk to answer any questions you may have.

Coordinator: Jim Bourg, jwbourg@gmail.com

Student Museum Gardens • 301 W. 7th St, Sanford, 32771

The Student Museum Gardens is an excellent resource to include in your early Spring planting for deciding what shrubs to include in your landscape. Make sure you are picking the right shrub for the location. Your visit to the gardens can help you decide the eventual height and width, what is best for windows areas, Flower color, leaf shape and density. The gardens provide various scenarios such as roses, sub-tropical, shade, waterwise and Florida native. Gardens are open seven days a week and a Master Gardener is usually available.

Coordinator: Dave Grace, dgrace01@aol.com

Waterwise FY&N Garden • 250 W County Home Rd, Sanford, 32773

After all the flurry of preparation and presentation, the Extension Butterfly Garden is up and running. Monarchs and Queens are the dominate butterflies because we have provided both nectar and host plants for them. Next year we will add more variety – Keep Lookin'!

Coordinator: Gabrielle Milch, fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov

Free and open to the public during regular business hours. For more information, to request a speaker or group visits contact garden coordinator.

The Seminole County Master Gardener EXPO
Coming Fall 2012 Watch for the date!
For more info: www.seminolecountymastergardeners.org



Pest Alert: Mining Bees, friendly insects in our gardens



Some residents in Seminole County have called our office to report Black Bees that have been observed to burrow into the ground for nesting during the last two Fall seasons (September – October). The bees, commonly known as Mining Bees and scientifically called *Anthropora abrupta* are solitary insects, native to the Southern part of the USA, from Texas to Canada, that nest in groups in areas devoid of thick vegetation. The bees are not aggressive. They are great pollinators and should not be considered a threat to humans or pets. Each female bee digs their own individual burrow, lining the walls and cells with a secretion that basically waterproofs the nest. The female will bring loads of dry pollen and mix it with nectar and secretions of her body. They lay a single egg onto the pollen mixture and seal the cell. There is an average of seven cells per burrow and there are reports of nesting sites containing more than five thousand cells. Adults emerge in the spring and after mating a new life cycle will begin.





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250 W. County Home Rd
Sanford FL 32773

Located across from Flea World,
17-92 & County Home Road

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Your Community Resource For
Gardening and Landscaping
Information
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[www.seminolecountyfl.gov/
Extensionservices](http://www.seminolecountyfl.gov/Extensionservices)

Cooperative Extension Services
Seminole County Office

SEMINOLE GREENTHUMB
Free quarterly
Newsletter

To receive by email
AFerrer@seminolecountyfl.gov

**Newsletter
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Seminole County:
USDA Hardiness
Zone 9b
Amer.Hort.Soc.
Heat Zone 10

EVENTS UPDATE ~ mark your calendar!

January 14, 2012
9:30am - 11:30am

Drought & Your Yard
Seminole Ext. Center Auditorium
250 W. County Home Rd. Sanford
Register 407-665-5575 Free!!!
fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov

February 11, 2012
9:00am - NOON

Fla. Vegetable Gardening Class
Seminole Ext. Center Auditorium
250 W. County Homes Rd. Sanford
Reg. required \$10.00 a class
407-665-5550
aferrer@seminolecountyfl.gov

February 12, 2012
2:00pm - 4:00pm

Florida Friendly Landscape Design
215 N. Oxford FREE!!!
Casselberry, Fl.
Registration before Feb. 10, 2012
407-665-5575
fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov

February 18, 2012
9:30am-11:30 am

Florida Friendly Lawn Care
Seminole Ext. Center Auditorium
250 W. County Home Rd. Sanford
Regist. 407-665-5575 FREE!!!!
fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov

February 25, 2012
9:00am - NOON

Fla. Vegetable Gardening Class
Seminole Ext. Center Auditorium
250 W. County Home Rd. Sanford
Registration required \$10.00 a class
407-665-5551
aferrer@seminolecountyfl.gov

March 7- June 13 2012 Master Gardening Training
Wednesdays Seminole Ext. Center Auditorium
9:30pm- 4:00pm 250 W.County Home Rd. Sanford
Regist. Fill out form @ Seminole County website before March 1st
[http://www.seminolecountyfl.gov/extensionservices/
adults/master_gardener.aspx](http://www.seminolecountyfl.gov/extensionservices/adults/master_gardener.aspx)

March 11, 2012
10:00am - 4:00pm

Sweetwater Garden Fair
Wekiva Springs Rd & Fox Valley Dr.
Guest Speakers Vendors
Free!!! Fun!!!
More info 407-880-8758
info www.swogc.info
emabbas@earthlink.net

